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A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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No. 340.

GRETCHEN'S LOVER.

BY FANNIE MERRILL.

Say! how and when will he come to me,
Over the land or over the sea?
Over the mountains or purpling Rhine?
Moonlight or starlight, which will look down?
Rose-wreath or snow wreath, which will crown
Our meeting, my own true lover's and mine?

We think that my face is as sweetly fair,
And that the gold in my braided hair,
And the wild fire that is in my cheek of snow?
Oh, surely he will say my eyes
Are violet under April skies.
As he often used in the Long Ago.

Ah, little Gretchen, the world is wide,
Lovers are fickle as wind and tide;
And dusk eyes glow where violet eyes shone;
Deep passionate eyes and bronze-brown hair;
Cheeks ripe crimson where yours are fair;
And that is when man's heart beats for one
alone?

Oh, pure are the snow-wreaths drifting down;
Pure is the face under rose-wreath crown.
Ah, Gretchen, was life too many to live?
Hast met at the last a lover true?
Tenderest love life ever knew;
Death-faithful lover Life can give!

Brave Barbara:

OR,

FIRST LOVE OR NO LOVE.

A STORY OF A WAYWARD HEART.

BY CORINNE CUSHMAN,

AUTHOR OF "BLACK EYES AND BLUE," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE PATRONS.

A COOL gray sky, a velvet lawn, a group of young people amusing themselves at croquet. Half hidden in century-old elms, and younger maples whose leaves were already edged with the scarlet and gold of September, a country house, large, rambling, picturesque, and with some claims to elegance in the later additions. Such an old house is always interesting—half human, as it were, and characteristic.

There is wealth in this particular house, not of fine furniture, heavy silver, noble books and rare old engravings only, but also of history and associations—for Washington has looked through those small diamond panes in that quaint bow window, and Lafayette has dined from the pieces of old blue china sacredly preserved on the dark sideboard of the ample dining room. But it is not with by-gone things that we must interest ourselves—rather with the eager, palpitating young life, the strange events and heart-histories of this present generation—not with the inmates of the grassy graveyard which lies on yonder hillside, and whose white headstones gleam through ancient and mossy trees—but with the gay group on the lawn, the click of whose mallets makes merry music in the quiet afternoon.

There was a girl there—sole heiress of the grand old place and descendant of a line of beautiful American women—the sight of whose face alone would make any spot attractive, it was so full of loveliness, youth, spirit, refinement. A peculiar face, of peculiar beauty; not altogether pleasing because too intense, too strong in character for the face of a girl of seventeen—but a face full of extraordinary promise of future ripe beauty, as well as of an original mind. A skin like velvet, dark, smooth and rich; a low handsome forehead, with straight, slender, black brows; a straight nose; a small, sweet, but spirited mouth, curved in the perfect line of beauty; a small, but firmly rounded chin; cheeks glowing with splendid health, but easily turning pale with the varying emotions of a passionate, ill-governed nature; and all lighted up by pair of strange, unfathomable, beautiful eyes, sometimes steel-blue, often a piercing black, but always surprising and fascinating, as they smiled or flashed fire from the deep covert of their dark lashes.

Barbara Rensselaer could not even play croquet like other young ladies, languidly and indifferently. She always tried to win; she became angry when she judged that her friends did not play fair; she infused the game with life and excitement; and when she was tired of it she threw down her mallet with the same decision with which she had taken it up.

On this particular afternoon she had for a partner a lank, light-haired youth whom she despised. She had taken him with no more commendable motive than to make the young gentleman uncomfortable with whom she would have preferred to play. At last she had this person's ball at her mercy, and so she placed her little foot on it; she looked up at him with a sort of sparkling defiance in her dark eyes which meant far more to him than the fate of his ball.

"Do you worst," he said, bitterly, in a low tone which could not reach the ears of their companions; "you never spare me!"

"You are quite big enough and old enough to take care of yourself, Mr. Delorme," she returned, saucily; and, with a sturdy stroke, of which we would hardly suppose the small, soft hand capable, she sent his ball flying far beyond the limits of the croquet-ground proper. Then she looked up at him and laughed. He looked down at her and frowned. But the frown passed in a moment, and there was no shade of annoyance in the cool blue eyes which sought to read the girl's soul. As well seek to look to the bottom of a lake rippled by every passing breeze! Barbara's nature was deep—unfathomable, but any one might see the little clouds and dimples, the waves and shadows, which closed over its surface. Delisle Delorme was a



"Do your worst," he said, in a tone which could not reach the ears of their companions, "you never spare me!"

man of the world, and one who could do as he pleased with a great many people—especially with young and artless girls—yet Barbara had succeeded in puzzling and interesting him. He would have given, on that September afternoon, the marvelous great opal which burned on his little finger, and which had been presented to him by the Sultan of Turkey's own hand, to know whether this girl cared for him or not.

Did he care for her? It was almost as difficult for him to answer this doubt as the other. She teased, discomfited, bewitched, charmed, displeased him. He said to himself that she had a bad temper—that she was a coquette—a raw school-girl, too crude to please his fastidious taste, but also, that she was delightful, earnest, warm-hearted, beautiful, and would ripen into a superb woman. At all events—whether or not she loved him, whether or not he loved her—he had coolly determined to marry her.

He thought he could do it, for her father approved of it.

She knew that he thought so, and all that was obstinate in her high nature rose up in arms against his conceit.

It can be inferred that the wooing would not be of the softest.

"It is my money he is after," thought the haughty young beauty, as she laughed up in his face after sending his ball flying.

"I must be slow and cautious with her," thought the self-assured man, as he frowned broad, and then smoothed the frown into a smile.

Before the game was completed, the sun had set, and a servant came out to say that tea was waiting to be served.

The gay party threw down their weapons and left the contest undecided. Barbara walked up to the house with the flaxen-haired youth; Delorme followed beside a tall, fair young lady, with eyes bluer than his own and heavy braids and crimped pale gold hair. Another young couple emerged from a summer-house, where they had been engaged in watching the evening boat to Albany pass up the river; another came wandering in from the swing in the grove—altogether, about a dozen young people entered the wide hall of the old mansion, and made their way to the pleasant tea-room; for when Barbara was at her father's country house, she would have plenty of company, and nearly all of these were guests of her own inviting.

Delisle Delorme was not.

Her father had made the acquaintance of this gentleman through a mutual friend, and being uncommonly well pleased with his entertaining society, had invited him to visit Bellevue.

Bellevue was a commonplace name for the fine old Rensselaer homestead, but Lafayette had bestowed the cognomen, and its owners would not have changed it for the world. The soft, golden glow of sunset deluged the quaint tea-room as the youthful party entered it, gilding the massive silver on the table, bringing out a smile from the faces of the dark portraits on the darker panels of the wall, and kissing the fair brows and rosy cheeks of the dandies who took their places at the early tea. A perfect halo crowned Barbara's dark hair, as she sat with her back to the mullioned windo

ing thought that this might be the last time he should ever see it.

No wonder that, even in his fierce haste to catch the train, he had paused to throw one backward glance at that happy room and its beautiful young mistress half-child, half-woman! Perhaps he should never see either of them again.

The frightened faces of the young people had scarcely regained their natural color, when Mr. Rensselaer returned, and was ushered by the butler into the tea-room, where a pair of soft arms and lips awaited to welcome him, to say nothing of hot tea and a spring chicken, fried delightfully brown.

"Where's Delorme, eh, young ladies?" asked the cheery old gentleman, as he looked about benignly while allowing himself to be petted and administered to.

"He received a telegram, papa—only about twenty minutes ago—and was obliged to catch the half-past seven train. He must have hurried immensely to get it."

"Sorry, sorry," murmured the old gentleman. "Was there bad news?"

"He did not tell us, papa. But he looked pale and worried. However, he left word for you that he might return here to-morrow."

"I hope it's nothing very bad then, Barbara. Young gentlemen, I trust you will be able to fully make up to the ladies for the loss of Delorme for a single evening—ha! ha! Delightful fellow, though, certainly—been everywhere—knows everything."

"Knows too much," muttered a certain sharp young lawyer, who, being desperately in love with Barbara herself, continually winced under the very palpable encouragement which her father gave to his rival.

No one heard this muttered innuendo, nor did she herself hear her parent as he continued, in her ear:

"Barbara, I must have a little private talk with you this evening. Set your guests to amusing themselves and then come to me, in my office, for a few minutes, will you?"

Mr. Rensselaer's office was a small room back of the library—in former days, when books were fewer, it had been the library—and it was through the diamond panes of this quaint, old-fashioned room, with its bow-window, that Washington had once looked. Here the owner of this large estate now transacted the business of the place. It seemed to Barbara that it must be something vastly grave and important which her father chose to say to her in this severe little room, with its leather furniture and its high desk. However, as soon as her company was well disposed of, some walking on the moonlit piazza—the moon had just risen—some trifling at the piano, and one pair trifling over a book of prints, she glided through the lofty library into the smaller room, where her father sat in the deep, straight-backed arm-chair waiting for her, and lost in a reverie. Barbara drew a quaint little cricket to his feet, sat down on it, folded her dimpled hands over his knee, and looked up expectantly. Never a lovelier face was lifted to a father's smile than hers at that moment—so arch, so piquant, with the dark brows raised a little, expressing curiosity, the eager, bright eyes asking questions silently—all that was dangerous, rebellious, defiant

her strong character subdued and sleeping. The old gentleman put his hand fondly on the wavy black hair.

"Mr. Delorme and I had a conversation this morning before I went to town. What do you suppose it was about?"

"The currency, perhaps. You are always talking about the currency, papa, you know," was the sly answer, but the rich blood rushed into Barbara's cheeks and out again, leaving them pale.

"Wrong, this time, my daughter. We were talking about something almost equally interesting—about you, Barbara, as you very well know, only you are not inclined to help me say it! Mr. Delorme asked leave to pay his address to my daughter"—he paused, trying to read her face, but a baffling expression had come over it, and she made no remark. "I told him that I had no objection to his trying his luck. Was that right, Barbara?"

"I suppose it was right on your part, papa; but I am sorry."

"Why? I have imagined that you liked Mr. Delorme."

"Whether I like him or not, I shall never marry him—if that is what he wants me to do."

"One of your obstinate fits, Barbara? If so, I must warn him to wait until you have changed your mind."

"No, papa; not a naughty fit this time, but a settled determination, made on good grounds."

"Bless me, child! how wise and serious you are growing. State some of these 'grounds,' will you?"

"He is a stranger, papa; there is something about him which strikes me as not quite sincere—and, anyhow, I do not like Englishmen, and he is one"—she spoke rapidly in a low, troubled voice, as not liking to have to give reasons.

"He is far from a stranger, Barbara; I have seen his letters of credit and recommendation—yes, met and conversed with personal friends of his from England, who are themselves above suspicion, and who vouch for his respectability. As to his sincerity, I flatter myself I have had some experience with human nature, and I deem him to be one of the most ardent, sincere young men I have ever met. As to his being an Englishman—pshaw! are they not our brothers—and Delorme, certainly, is completely Americanized. I esteem his attentions to you creditable and flattering, Barbara; for, proud as we are of our name, independent in fortune and position, this lover of yours, Delisle Delorme, bears an older, prouder name, inherits far vaster estates, and is in every other way worthy of my daughter, high as she holds her haughty little head. Barbara, I will whisper in your ear a secret. Delorme is the true but not the last and only name of your suitor. He is of a noble family, with but one person—and that person an epileptic, whose mind is rapidly failing under his bodily affliction—between him and an earlom!" At present he remains in this country, concealing his name, claims and expectations, for good reasons, which he has confided to me. Rest assured that it is for no fault of his own that he seeks retirement—even disguise. It is an act of self-denial on his part performed solely in the interests of another. He has made everything plain to me; and the person her father thinks worthy of Barbara's companionship, she shall be able to take on trust. Delisle Delorme is a sort of martyr, my dear, who has my sympathy. It would please me greatly if you could take a fancy to him."

He added, suddenly, after watching his daughter's pale face a few moments:

"I am worried at his having received a message this evening. I trust there is no more ill-luck in store for him—that he will return here to-morrow. And I hope, when he does return, that you, Barbara, will be kind to him."

Her head dropped; she remained silent; after some time she quickly kissed her father and sprang from the room, as if to escape the necessity for giving him any further answer.

CHAPTER II.

A MANEUVERING MOTHER.

"Oh, I am so tired—so tired!"

A young man sat in an oriel window which overlooked one of the fairest bits of scenery in England. Immediately beneath the window was a "smooth-shaven lawn," in the midst of whose velvet greenery were set beds of flaming bloom—verbena, carnations, and monthly roses. A fountain threw up a silver shower not far away; snowy statues revealed glimpses of their classic beauty from many a nook; beyond the lawn a fine old grove parted to show a sheet of lovely water, and beyond that were wooded hills, a dark purple-blue against a pale-blue sky. Repose and beauty everywhere—everywhere the culture, the perfection which betrays the lavish use of money as well as of taste. The room in which the young man sat was a large and lofty chamber, on one side of which opened his bed and dressing-rooms. It was furnished with every conceivable luxury; and the walls and ceilings were an endless study of exquisite painting. A large and comfortable couch of crimson velvet was drawn up to one side of the window, and at the upper end of this the young man was sitting, or rather lounging, and looking listlessly off over at the purple hills and steel-blue water.

He was all alone in the room at that moment; the book he had been reading had fallen from his hand; an easel, with a landscape partly outlined on its canvas, stood not far away.

"I am so tired!" he murmured, despondently, while tears stood in his great black eyes. "I would give all I have to give—my fortune, my title—to be a healthy shepherd boy, tending sheep on yonder hills."

Yet to look at him you would have seen no evidence of ill-health, beyond a creamy pallor of the smooth, dark skin. He was singularly handsome; with dark hair and eyes delicate, high-bred features, a graceful figure, feet and hands as small as a lady's. Nor was there the slightest deformity, nor any apparent disease. His slight air of languor looked more like the affected indolence of young men of his class than any proof of debility.

This was the young Earl of Dunleath, twenty-six, but looking not more than twenty-two years of age, with one of the longest tenures in the kingdom—with palaces in London and castles in England and Scotland—with miles upon miles of forests and moors for hunting, with lakes for boating and fishing—with power to do as he pleased with his large possessions—with youth, good looks, warm feelings—*everything* earth can bestow on a favorite son, except one thing—heaviness. It was the story of Tantalus over again in a sad, sad shape. Whenever he reached out his hand to enjoy his possessions *the curse fell on him*.

"My poor boy! My poor Herbert! Cheer up. I have found an amusement for you, now, I am quite certain. The hours shall no longer drag which we spend at Dunleath—they shall fly, softly and happily."

The speaker, who came lightly into the apartment in time to hear the dreary words of her son, was a splendid-appearing woman, of tall commanding figure, snow-white hair, and eyes large, dark and bright as her boy's. The look she gave him betrayed the infinite love, the infinite compassion of a mother for the child who is unfortunate.

Sitting beside him she ran her shapely, jeweled fingers through his rippling, purple-black hair.

"I have invited a young lady to the castle, Herbert; and she arrived, with her father, just before luncheon. She is taking a rest in her room, now; when she is dressed for dinner I shall bring her in to see you."

"But you know I detest visitors, mother—young ladies of all others! You promised me we should be quiet here."

"So we shall—so we shall, dear," patting and caressing his hand while she spoke. "This one is really no more than a little girl—quite a child. You will not feel with her as you would with a young lady out in society. She has seen very little of the world—artless and full of spirit—and only a little over sixteen. I have asked her here for a few weeks, Herbert, in the hope and belief that you will like her and find her entertaining."

"Well, mother, I should have preferred to be left alone. What is her name, and who is she, since the deed is done?"

"It is Lady Alice Ross. You remember Lord Ross?"

"Oh, very well. I did not know he had a daughter."

"He is—and she is a sweet little creature, Poor thing! she has only her title. You can have no idea, Herbert, to what straits Lord Ross is reduced. You know his son ruined him—the estates were small at the best—by betting at the Derby and high play, and, when nothing more was to be got out of his father, ran away to the United States and ended by cutting his throat in a hotel there. I believe the family jewels have been sacrificed to the support of the family since. Fortunately, there is only Lord Ross and this one daughter."

How they get along we can only surmise. I do not believe the poor little thing will have anything better than a wash-muslin in which to come down to dinner. So, you see it is an absolute kindness to ask her here for a few weeks. I can be very motherly to her—and, perhaps, manage to replenish her wardrobe without her knowing but what her father paid for the things."

"It's all very well, mother, if she doesn't bore me!"

"Well, well, if she does I will keep her out of your way. But I expect her to prove a nice companion for you, darling."

"I am not a baby, mother, to be amused by another little child."

"I know that, Herbert, but a bright, healthy, laughing young girl, without any airs or artifices, will do you good."

"No, she will not. She will only annoy me, mother. If I could go off on a hunting expedition now, to Scotland—that would amuse me," querulously.

"You shall go, darling. I have been talking with Jackson about it. He is certain it can be managed. He will go along, of course, and have charge of you. But it will not be the season for two months yet. Meantime you must amuse yourself some other way. Promise me, my dear, that you will not fly out in any tempest before Lady Alice. She is such a timid child, you would frighten her."

"Perhaps it would amuse me to frighten her," answered the earl, with a curious laugh in his large eyes.

"Now, Herbert, be good," said his lady-mother, coaxing him as she would a very small child. "In about half an hour I shall bring Lady Alice to see you. I must go now to make my own toilet. Do you think you will come down to dinner?"

"Yes, I think so."

"Good-by, till I come again."

The haughty countess kissed her son again before she swept out of his apartment to make a grand toilet in her own.

Haughty and reserved toward the world—perhaps the more so that she had to hide as well as possible the traces of a twenty years heartache—the stately lady was neither cold nor reticent to her unhappy son—her only child—sole heir of all the splendors of Dunleath, on whose frail shoulders had fallen the weight of her husband's mantle, too magnificent to be worn by one so cursed of Fate.

Of a high, ambitious nature, her hopes of her son had received a terrible shock. Not only was it impossible for him to claim his seat in parliament among his peers, but it began to grow very possible and probable that the young earl would die without having married and left an heir. In that case the noble title and estates would pass to a cousin of his whom the countess had no reason to love. Rather than see that man step into her boy's place it seemed to the prejudiced and bitterly-repining woman that she would do anything—suffer anything.

Every year brought Herbert nearer to the edge of the early grave which awaited him. He did not seem to care to marry—*men if any of the high-born and lovely girls in his own rank of life would have accepted his hand which was doubtful*. The countess fully realized how things were going, and resolved, in her desperation, to save the title and estates, if she could not save her son. The physicians had assured her that he would never live to see his thirtieth birthday. In the short time remaining to him he must marry and have an heir.

Delorme Dunleath, the man she hated, should never be the Earl of Dunleath! He would be disappointed of that expectation! Wretched solace to a mother's aching heart! yet, such as it was, it was her only comfort.

This visit of Lord Ross and his daughter which the countess had so artfully announced to Herbert, was the result of long and hard thinking on her part. Lord Ross was poor enough to accept a bribe—to sell his child. Lady Alice was young enough to be made a victim. There was the result of her cogitations in a nut-shell.

In less than an hour the countess returned to her son's apartment. She had Lady Alice with her; but, before she would admit her, she reconnoitered, to see that all was in fair order; for it was not always that the earl was in a fit state to receive company. It was the sunset hour; the large room was full of a golden light; the young earl was leaning in an embrasure of the window, gazing, with a rapt, melancholy air, at the broken column of gold which was fusing across the lake, visible between vistas of ancient oaks and graceful beeches.

The proud countess took the timid young girl by the hand and led her in.

"Herbert, my son, this is Lady Alice Ross."

The mother saw, with pleasure, that Herbert was looking his best; and, what was more, that his fine eyes kindled as they rested on the maiden by her side—kindled with surprise, admiration, and a sudden light of life which she had not seen in them for a long time.

Lady Alice was very simply dressed—in a wash-muslin, as the countess had inferred—with only a string of pearls about her whiter necklace, and a rose in her hair; and her manners were as girlish as her dress. Yet she seemed to have brought all that glory into the room. She had such a sweet smile, such dove-like, soft brown eyes, such a lovely face! Her hair rippled along her low, fair forehead, "brown in the shadow and gold in the sun." She looked at the young earl with a troubled, sweet, sympathetic look, that melted into a merry smile, as she said, "I thought I was to be introduced to an invalid."

"Oh, I am not always ill. A good part of the time I am as well as any one," answered the earl, quickly. "My mother did not tell you what was the matter with me, Lady Alice?" with a jealous, vexed intonation, which the countess understood.

"Oh, no. She said that you were not strong, and were confined to your room more than was pleasant."

"That is true. I hope you will take pity on me, and help me to while away some of the tedious hours."

"If the countess allows it I shall only be too happy."

This, said with ardor, would have been art or affectation with most young ladies; but the sincere air of Lady Alice thrilled the weary soul of the invalid with keen delight. He sat looking at her, not endeavoring to suppress the admiration he felt; looking at her sunny hair, into her brown eyes, and even at the soft folds of her white muslin falling about her slender figure.

Lady Alice was so sorry for him! She was too artless to hide her innocent interest; though, truly, she could not discover in the handsome young earl any traces of illness. So they chatted a few moments; and then a servant knocked to say that dinner waited to be served, and to ask if his master, the earl, would come down or dine in his apartments.

"I will come down, Sims," said his young master, cheerfully.

He attempted to rise; but Lady Alice, who was looking at him smilingly, saw a slight twitching of the muscles of his face.

"My dear child, we will leave Herbert to come when he chooses—" the countess spoke in an altered tone, almost clutching Lady Alice by the arm and hurrying her across the floor and out into the corridor. "The earl is nervous to-night," she added, apologetically, when they were out of his apartment, "and I think best he should remain where he is. Wait a moment, and I will tell him so."

She darted back into the room, closing the door after her.

In less than a minute she came out, saying, calmly:

"Now, if you please, I am ready."

The dim light of the corridor hid her paleness from her young companion, who went gayly by her side to the sumptuous dinner, with an appetite unspoiled—she had not seen the Earl of Dunleath rolling on the floor, with clenched hands, staring eyes and pale lips wet with foam—she had not seen youth, beauty and strength in the agonizing spasms of epilepsy.

Nor did the countess intend the young girl to see that blushing sight, if vigilance could prevent it, until she saw it as the wife of the unhappy sufferer!

CHAPTER III. WHO WAS SHE?

In one of the private parlors of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, a lady awaited impatiently the coming of the one for whom she had sent, and who could not possibly arrive, by the closest calculation, before half-past nine. It was nearly that now, as she ascertained, by consulting for the fiftieth time the tiny watch, glistening with jewels, which she drew from her belt.

This lady had arrived from a Liverpool steamer that afternoon, and had registered on the books as Mrs. Courtenay, London, England. Good luck had attended her in the first hour of her visit to a strange land; a curious accident had prevented a long, weary, perhaps useless search, and placed in her hand the fact of which she was in search. As she had stood a few minutes in the rotunda of the hotel, giving to a clerk some directions about baggage, rooms, and so forth, two young swells standing near, conversing together, had caught her quick ear by the mention of a name.

"So, Delise Delorme is still out at Bellevue, is he?—I don't wonder that he lingers in that delightful retreat! never was a lovelier girl or a greater 'catch' than old Rensselaer's daughter. Have you ever met her, Chawles?"

Mrs. Courtenay immediately turned to the two young gentlemen.

"Pardon me a thousand times, gentlemen, but I hear you mention the name of a friend of mine, Mr. Delorme, whose address I have unfortunately lost. I am Mrs. Courtenay, of No. 1000 Terrace Row, Belgravia, London—an intimate friend of Mr. Delise Delorme's. May I ask you to do me the great favor to write down his present address for me?" and when she retired to her rooms for a little rest and seclusion after the fatigue of the sea voyage, she had a card on which was written the address which a marvelous good fortune had thrown into her hand. The message which she had dispatched from the telegraph office in the hotel, previously to taking her bath and ordering a dinner to her parlor at seven, hardly contained anything on the surface which need have so disturbed its recipient, and sent him off, at night, to the city in hot haste, despite the fascination of Barbara Rensselaer, which would fain have held him at Bellevue; it was simply this:

FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL, Parlor No. —.

Mrs. Courtenay has arrived from London and will be pleased to receive a call from Mr. Delorme at his convenience.

Several moments of silence followed.

Then she added, as softly as a cat purrs:

"I do not blame you for that, Delorme. I expected it long ago. Only I think it would only be fair to the young lady to tell her everything. You will do that, I suppose?"

She was a woman who, at first glance,

had been suspected to be twenty-six or eight years of age; but who, on closer inspection, was suspected of being several years older—perhaps even thirty-five, in those unguarded moments when the youthful smile had given place to lines of care or weariness.

She was very pretty, with a certain made-up kind of prettiness. She had a slight figure; a very small waist, hands and feet; plenty of auburn hair, with a golden tinge which redeemed it from being red, crimped and frizzled in fashionable style; fine hazel eyes, and a very fair, delicate complexion. She wore her clothes with the grace of a Frenchwoman; and had those hundred tricks of eyes, voice and manner which please and attract men—at least, at first sight.

The tiny hands of her watch marked precisely half-past nine when a knock sounded on the door. For a brief instant she pressed her hand to her heart before calling out in a clear, sweet voice, free from any tremor, "Entrez." The waiter entered.

"Vivian!"

"Delorme!"

That was all either said at first. They stood looking at each other, both pale—she beseechingly—he furiously.

At length she made a motion as if to throw herself about his neck; he waved her off.

"You swore not to follow me," he said.

"I know it. I kept my word as long as I could. Only think, I kept it two years, Delorme!"

"A long while, truly, for you to keep faith," he sneered.

"I hoped you had grown kinder by this time, Delorme—that you had forgiven me, and—perhaps—would take me back."

"You hoped nothing of the kind, Vivian. You could not expect it! You know that there is not a viper which crawls on the surface of the earth the sight of which could be hateful to me as the sight of your face. When this life and the next come to an end, then, and not till then, will I forgive you."

"Oh, Heaven! how hard you are, Delorme. Unnatural! Surely, my crime was not so great! Women have done far worse things than deserve as I deserved. There are more shameful deceptions than that! And I did it because I was so fond of you, Delorme," weeping.

"So fond of me that you cursed my boyish life with a deadly weight which dragged it down—down; and from which even my manhood cannot entirely free itself. That was kindness—that was fondness of the devil's own kind!"

"I did not mean it to hurt you; you know that. I thought only of myself—of my lo—"

"Hush! Do you suppose I care to listen to the old rags?" I dare say you are out of money, and have come for a fresh supply. You have extravagant habits, madam."

A sudden red light leaped out of her hazel eyes, drying the tears in them; she lifted her drooping head and looked him full in the face, nor blanched before his stormy frown; slowly she drew a pocket-book from her dress, holding it toward him.

"In this book you will find all the money you gave me two years ago—every pound of it—two thousand pounds in all. Delorme, if you need money, take it—I shall never use it. No, it was not for this trash I sought you out; it was for something which I will have, unless you treat me more like a human being, Delorme."

"What?"

"Revenge."

She spoke the ugly word very dryly, and in a low voice. It did not sound very badly, as she said it; yet, therefore, it may have meant the more and been the more dangerous.

Men are apt to "smile superior" when women speak such words; Delise Delorme did so when he heard it.

Yet his heart sunk duly down, despite his sneering smile. The fragile woman before him certainly had it in her power to do him deep and terrible injury—had, in years past, done him such injury, and had still the strength left to inflict harassing wounds. He had depended on her *will* not to hurt him—he had believed her feeling toward him—her proposed remorse—would rather urge her to aid than to injure him; yet here she confounded him, threatening revenge!

"Oh, you smile," she said, coldly and bitterly.

"I do not feel like smiling," he answered, now calmly, forcing himself to adopt a softer tone toward her; "I feel unhappy to see you here, Vivian—to feel that you will never do, for long, what you promised—let alone alone. And I pity you. I pity a woman who is capable, after inflicting such wrong as you did on me, of talking of revenge. It is I who should prate about revenge! Yet, did I ever repay your crime with anything like revenge, Vivian?"

"No—and yes. You have not struck, beaten or starved me; but you have punished me with refinement of cruelty which has inflicted worse than physical torture. That is done with! I feel anew, and that I once more meet your eye and hear your voice, that I need never hope for different!"

"Never! you say well. How could you expect it?"

"Different treatment from you. The trodden worm will turn to sting the foot of its tormentor. If I yet learn, after all these years, to hate you, Delorme, it will be your fault. You are not married yet, I infer!" she suddenly added, with a change of manner.

"Married!" he echoed, bitterly, and as if surprised.

"I overheard some gentlemen in this hotel speaking of you. They were saying that you were paying attention to a beautiful young lady at the place where I telegraphed you. I have the address here in my book."

The reddish-brown eyes watched his countenance as she said this; Delorme made a great effort to keep his color and affect his indifference; but he was sensible that he flushed and paled under the vigilant eyes of his lady companion. Something like an oath struggled to his lips, but he kept them closed.

That she should have gained a knowledge of his whereabouts, the very day she set foot in this country, was bad enough; but to have also just where to go, and what to do to annoy, injure, destroy him most effectually—this, indeed, was beyond mere aggravation. If she had been a worm and he could have set foot on her, then, and crushed her, he would have been tempted to do it.

Several moments of silence followed.

Then she added, as softly as a cat purrs:

this outfit, and intend to run it decently just as long as I can pull trigger or hold a toothpick. If there is any dispute go outside and settle it like gentlemen should—but I'll not have any pulling hair or scratching faces in here."

"If Mr. Laughing Dick is agreeable I'll step outside and argue the matter with him," coolly said Little Volcano, as he pushed his checks over to be cashed.

But evidently this wasn't just what Sleepy George was after. He pulled Laughing Dick aside, and when the boy miner passed to the door the gambler was *now* set.

The miners who had sided with Little Volcano set up a wild yell at this, and nothing would do but they must go back and celebrate the bloodless victory of their little hambant in a drink of whisky. Zimri Coon in vain tried to draw Little Volcano away with him.

"No—there's no dog in yonder lied to me. He knew well enough the bet was mine. I'm going to bust his bank, or leave what I won, You can go home!"

Returning to his seat Little Volcano recommended his game, and if he played heavily before he doubled the stakes now. Even the steel-like nerves of Long Tom, veteran gambler as he was, seemed a little unstrung, as bet after bet was won by the boy miner. Only he and one other was playing—a bushy-bearded man in a long cloak, who also bet with a cool nerve. At first the game ran steadily in Little Volcano's favor; then it began to fluctuate. Zimri privately whispered to his partner that he suspected foul play, but if so it was so adroitly managed that even his keen, well-trained eyes could not detect it.

It was the last turn of the cards. Little Volcano placed his stake upon the nine spot. At the same time a bag of dust was dropped upon the tray. The card was drawn—the nine won. And, as before, a hand forstalled Little Volcano. But it remained upon the pile. Quick as a flash a bowie-knife was driven through flesh and bone, sinking deep into the table, and Sleepy George gave a howl of mingled pain and anger.

Two knives were leveled at the young man's back. Zimri warded off one blow. The cloaked stranger knocked the second assassin down, but as he fell he tore off the bushy beard, revealing a dark, handsome face only too well known to many present.

"Joaquin! Joaquin! Shoot him—kill him!"

With a shrill laugh the outlaw flung his chair at the chandelier, instantly destroying the lights. Little Volcano sprung up, a foul blow from behind.

CHAPTER XVI.

ZIMRI COON'S PHILOSOPHY.

"Lord! what's the use? Not a dog-gone bit! Ef a feller's lucky, he'll git jest so high—that he'll come to a greasy spot which 'll make 'im slip clean down ag'in; or ef he holds on tight, some unfuckin' cuss at the bottom 'll grip his coat-tails an' haul 'im down to his own level—or bust somethin'." Ef luck comes an' squats right down in a feller's lap, ten to one he'll git mad 'cause she don't pay out fast enough, an', like a pesky durn fool, he'll keep foolin' round 'till he turns her bottom side up, or she gits mad an' gives 'im the dirty shake, kickin' the blame fool furder down than he ever was afore—easy, boy—kinder easy, than!

"That's a case in point. Take the boy. He gits on a bu'st. He goes to buckin' ag'in faro. That's all right. I do it myself once in a while, or oftener. But he—sech luck! Twas like his deadin' jest to suit himself. That was when the luck come in—plum, rust-class stud-hoss luck! Then was the fuss, which giv' him a good excuse to draw out, some thousand's ahead. Ef he'd quit then—but no—back he goes ag'in, an' what comes on it? Jest pizen bad luck—nothin' shorter. He gits knocked on the head, loses every durn cent, an' would 'a' lost more, only I manidged to drag 'im out an' tote him here on my shoulders—got a dig in the hum, too—stings like!"

A faint moan came from the lips of Little Volcano, and the old man's soliloquy ceased as he bent anxiously over his patient. As he said, the boy miner had received a severe blow upon the head, with some blunt instrument, during the confusion which followed Joaquin's bold action. It was plain that Sleepy George's friends had done their best to carry out his plans. The lad's shirt pocket was gone—torn or cut off, and with it his note-book, in which the thief probably hoped to find the chart. At the expense of a flesh-wound, Zimri Coon had carried his senseless friend out from the struggling crowd and over the hill to a secure covert, expecting search would be made as soon as the thieves found out their mistake.

Little Volcano sat up and stared around him. In the faint light of the moon he did not at first recognize Coon.

"Praise the Lord! little 'un—taint's as bad as I begin to think. You sneered me—yas, I was bad skeered, an' I don't shame to own it. You lay so like a stuck hog—"

"My head hurts," muttered Little Volcano, wincing, as his hand touched the bleeding wound.

"That's most gen'ally the case when a feller gets the hull gable end knocked off 'im. You got a pizen nasty clout—it sorta glanced, or you'd bin cold meat afore now. They ain't no bones broke, I'm pritty sure. You'll be all right in the mornin', less 'tar for a headache. Take off your han'kerchief—so. Tain't the fust broken pat'e I've hed the doctorin' of. They ain't no water here—whisky's too scarce—so I cain't wash you up mighty nice. But then I don't reckon you want to go courtin'—eh! did I hurt ye, little 'un?" he asked, as Little Volcano winced.

"No—tell me all about it."

But he did hurt—not the wound upon the head. Those chance words brought back all the black despair and bitter pain of the past evening, until, young and full of life as he was, the boy miner asked himself whether it would not have been better had he died where he fell beneath that treacherous stroke.

"They mean business, chuck up," added Zimri. "That's why I bring you here 'stead o' takin' you to the shanty. Ef we 'spect to ever git any good out o' this bit o' paper, we hain't got no time to fool 'round here. Things is gittin' kinder unheathy. That Sleepy George—durned fool me that I didn't let the grizzly chaw 'im up." He must a' hearn the hull yell, an' he's bin tellin' a part on it to suit himself.

Their bin right smart talk 'bout you an' Joaquin's gang; they'll be more afer this night—for he tuck your part back that ther. Pears to me like we'd better be lookin' up some other stamp in ground."

"I've done nothing wrong—I'll not snake away from their suspicions as though I were a criminal," muttered Little Volcano.

"No more would I—if they gets up on their way, why well just wade in an' clean out the hull dog-gone outfit—we will so! But—though

we kin do it, easy—s'pose we wait a bit fast. Let's go try for this pile o' gold. I'm clean busted—an' I hedn't time to rake in your pile afore I packaged—"

"Anything—anything. I'll do just as you advise," interrupted Little Volcano, wearily.

"Then the fust thing is for you to lay down an' take a snooze. I'll go back to the shanty an' git some things we can't well do without. Don't you stir until you hear me comin'. You won't try to play no tricks on a feller?"

"Never fear, old fellow. When I go back there, I'll take you along to see fair play. There are several persons in town I am in debt to—and when I pay up, somebody's going to have a benefit, sure as you're a foot high!"

Renewing his caution, Zimri Coon noiselessly glided away, promising soon to return. But his absence was a good deal longer than he anticipated. Hard Luck was all afoot, lights flashing here and there, men rushing in every direction. The disturbance at Long Tom's had culminated in a free fight; pistols and knives were freely used—two men being killed and a dozen more injured. Added to this the cry that Joaquin was in town quickly spread. The members of the vigilance committee—or Man-Hunters, as they may justly be termed—were called together by Sheriff Hayes and hot search was made for the bold outlaw. As might have been expected, this was fruitless. Murders had long since left the town, and was then miles away safe upon the back of his noble black.

From the hillside Zimri Coon saw all this, and it was an hour before he ventured down to his cabin. Once five minutes sufficed, and, bearing a light pick, shovel and couple of pans, he made the best of his way back to where he had left Little Volcano. He found the boy miner awake, brooding over what had occurred. And then, yearning for sympathy, Little Volcano told his old friend the whole truth.

"I knowed it!" muttered Zimri, disgustedly.

"I said so from that fust day—when I fust set eyes on you two, I sais, sais I—" That's the little 'un's everlastin' happiness or his 'tarnal pizen!' I did so! But I knowed what young blood was, an' so I held my hush. I knowed you wouldn't listen to reason to them; I knowed it, 'cause I've binثار myself! You needn't frown, little 'un. I'm a tough old dornick now, but the time was when I was as young an' spon'le as an' piert an' fit to bu'st a young female gal's heart clean to flinders as you be—I was so! But I got my eyes opened—got laid out flatter'n a feller tryin' to tickle a mule's gable end with a jimson burn!" Twas Meely Smith—or Squire Smith's da'er. He was the ace of trumps, ye might say, in our part; better off than the rest o' us, an' put on more style—they did! But Meely! I got stuck on her bad! She soon found it out—was mighty 'r'ndy when we was alone together. I used to go fer her lips wuss'n a b'r up a honey tree—an' she stood it like a little man, too. That used to set me red-hot—an' didn't I tease her fer to name the day when we could git hitched? She alays brung up the old square as a 'xuse—he was too high-toned for the likes o' me to get his da'er easy. Finally she 'sented to 'lope with me—as she called it—but she said we must uss' strategi. I sca'ly knew what that meant, but I was so dead gone, I lowed whatever she said must be right, so she fixed it all up. I was to dress up as old aunt Sally—a nigger woman they used to own. An' durned of I didn't do it, too! I put on the duds, blacked up an' all. I was to call at the house fer her, so's to help kerry her bun'les. She met me. The things was in the house, she said; all the firs was to bed, so that wouldn't be no danger. I followed her in; she left me in the dark fer a minnit. Then she come back with a light. Fust that was a sucker, then that was a yell an' a haw-haw. The room was chuck full o' wimmen an' galls—all smortin'—an' Meely was the wust tickled o' the bunch. I packached. Went right through the winder. Didn't stop to say good-by, nuther.

"That was my fust an' last tempt at courtin'. Wimmen is mighty good things—I don't say nothin' aginst 'em. Ef 'twasn't for them, I don't reckon thad be many folks a-livin' now. An' sence they're here somebody's got to marry 'em, I spos'. But this is my idee. That's a heap o' fellers in the shape o' men as is pesky mean an' 'tarnal no-account that of they was run through a rollin' mill an' then spread out fer manure, not even a cuckle-burr or jimson weed would grow 'thin a mile o' the place. Them's jist the kind as is fit fer jinin' to the wimmen. That's what natur' tended 'em fer."

"That's a case in point. Take the boy. He gits on a bu'st. He goes to buckin' ag'in faro. That's all right. I do it myself once in a while, or oftener. But he—sech luck! Twas like his deadin' jest to suit himself. That was when the luck come in—plum, rust-class stud-hoss luck! Then was the fuss, which giv' him a good excuse to draw out, some thousand's ahead. Ef he'd quit then—but no—back he goes ag'in, an' what comes on it? Jest pizen bad luck—nothin' shorter. He gits knocked on the head, loses every durn cent, an' would 'a' lost more, only I manidged to drag 'im out an' tote him here on my shoulders—got a dig in the hum, too—stings like!"

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It will delight and excite every reader, and measurably increase the noted scout's popularity as a writer for the popular weekly press.

Ep. That Corinne Cushman's new story, starting in this number, will be received with the liveliest satisfaction, we can well understand. No author of the day has made a more agreeable impression. The new story will confirm the promise of "Black Eyes and Blue." In several respects "Brave Barbara" is one of the best-conceived and finely-told romances of real life which we have ever given our readers—and this is, indeed, saying much. We want our lady readers especially to speak of it to their friends that all may enjoy its perusal.

Ep. Go to the Centennial Exposition by all means, if you have not already been. It is one of the most stupendous exhibitions the world has ever known. A mere walk through the great buildings is well worth the trip to Philadelphia. The "main building," covering twenty-one acres, literally contains a "world of wealth," for the mere value of the articles shown is estimated at many millions. Every civilized nation on the globe is represented—most of them with a perfectly splendid display of every art, industry and product of their country. It is simply magnificent beyond words to express. It is like walking through Fairy Land to go through its almost countless exhibits. But, even this is only one feature of that Exposition. Machinery Hall is by far the most wonderful collection of mechanical art and invention that ever yet has been made. Agricultural Hall is, in its specialty, like all our great State Fairs combined, multiplied by one hundred—incomparably interesting, curious and suggestive. It is all the land, sea and air products, and their associated industrial arts, of all the nations. Horticultural Hall reminds one of Coleridge's creation:

"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A Stately Pleasure Dome decree."

The Art building and its "Annex" is such a collection of the paintings, marbles, mosaics, etc., of all countries, as astonishes every visitor by its extent and intrinsic value.

Then there follows a train of subsidiary exhibitions that in themselves, at any other time and place, would excite the most eager interest. Oh, it is all glorious enough for a whole century of effort, and is an offering to modern civilization of which this generation may well be proud. Not to see it all is to lose a sight and knowledge of the grandest achievement of the century.

Sunshine Papers.

Observation versus Experience.

If I may be permitted to state a conviction, which I do not find upon a clear personal remembrance of that period in my own existence, I would set forth as a proposition that observation and experience enter as equal forces into every life newly initiated into the broad brotherhood of universal humanity. But that these forces though always relative do not always remain equal is clear to the most superficial observer of human nature. Still I doubt if superficial or even careful students of human life are prepared to state definitely just when those correlative powers commence to take precedence one of the other.

Did any one ever yet determine at what period of infancy in general, or at what time in the life of any particular infant, the child com-

mences to act upon the relation of causes and effects, for then it is that observation and experience cease to be of equal force! Who is able to decide just when the heartrending yell of the infant-traveler in car or stage are the direct result of real misery, or rapidly-developing temper acting in association with very well defined instinct that infantile anger and infantile music are most potent powers in producing desired results? Certain it is that at a most early period the embryo man and woman learn to trade upon the effects of observation. Is it not equally true that from the embryo man and woman up to the allotted three-score years and ten of the real ones, no person, no matter how well he or she may have learned to trade upon observation, is inclined to accept that observation in the place of actual experience?

King Baby may have it very implicitly impressed upon his juvenile consciousness that the result of attempting to secrete stray pins in his digestive regions, or efforts of his to turn somersaults upon the stair-landing, and various other cherubic little performances, will inevitably culminate in dire disaster, through natural effects and parental causes, to his small lordship; yet that wee masculine will never allow observation of statements made to him or the results of the same performances in connection with any of his childish friends to supersede individual experience. That young man will persistently swallow pins, coins, his fists, or any other stray commodities, and do all manner of things which he is warned not to do, with a manful determination to learn if fate dare treat him as it has treated his predecessors and contemporaries. And will any amount of experience that goes to prove the fact that observation held in the past would have saved from ill, ever help that young man, as the years go by, to accept the fate of others as the world is "going to the bad?" let us not go to the bad with it. If everybody were to act up to that remark, I don't believe the world would go to the bad. That is one reason why we have so many pure-minded beings—because they are determined to show others that the world can be made better by its inhabitants being better themselves. All bad indeed! It's no such thing.

Their heroism may not be of the kind noted in novels; they may not have had their names engraved on the scroll of earthly fame, but angels have recorded their deeds, and such a record is more lasting than any we could write. In true nobility of heart they keep their helping hand to a fallen brother or sister; a kind action and word of interest may have turned many from their wayward course, and they have not withheld them. How many of God's creatures are at this very moment, while I am penning these lines, comforting the sick and dying, administering to the afflicted and aiding the poverty-stricken!

Don't say we are all bad; don't even think it. It is not Christian-like to harbor such thoughts. They'll make you a misanthrope and render your life most unhappy. Friends may have slighted you—may have treated you unkindly—may have been ungrateful to you for all you have done for them, and you may feel like losing all confidence in human nature; but don't do so. If some prove false, you will find others who are true. Don't view humanity from such a morbid standpoint. We may not be all pieces of perfection, but we are not all bad; if we were, there'd be ten times more woe and misery in the world than there now is.

When you feel inclined to think how many wicked individuals there are about, just be thankful that there are no more and be grateful for that, and think of how many of Nature's noblemen there are, and you'll find that a much pleasanter topic for your consideration.

We have sunny days and sunny hearts; bright hours and bright natures; golden moments and golden characters, all about us; and, surely, these are enough to make us contented and happy with the world and its inhabitants.

If the world is "going to the bad," let us not go to the bad with it. If everybody were to act up to that remark, I don't believe the world would go to the bad. That is one reason why we have so many pure-minded beings—because they are determined to show others that the world can be made better by its inhabitants being better themselves. All bad indeed! It's no such thing.

Foolscap Papers.

Dom Pedro Interviewed.

I sent my card up to his room in the hotel by two waiters, and was soon in the August—or November presence of the Emperor of Brazil, who cordially bumped his head against mine three or four times, and took my hat and sat on the floor conveniently beside him, where he could spit in it without having to reach too far! Brushing some peanut shells from a chair he bade me take a seat.

Told him I had come to interview him, and he replied so I had n't come to assassinate him it would be all right.

WHITEHORN. You left a pretty good situation. I understand in Brazil to visit us?

DON. Yes, I have a pretty steady job, so far there.

W. What sized paper collar do you wear, DON?

D. Thirty-two when I want it to go round my neck twice.

W. Brazil is one of the largest islands in the Pacific ocean, if I hear aright?

D. If you hear aright it is.

W. What is the breadth of its width?

D. Well, it is so wide that it reaches clear around the globe, and then laps over several hundred miles.

W. Is that so?

D. Even so, indeed.

W. What do you think of the United States so far as you've got, Dominy?

D. The United States for a nation is good enough, but the United States for lager is poor enough.

W. How is that?

D. Well, it flies to the head before it flies to the stomach.

W. Have you any design of coming here to live?

D. No. I find house rent is too high here for a large man with small means, or for a small man with large means, for that matter.

W. Mr. Pedro, are you the renowned gentleman who first introduced the athletic and exhilarating game called Pedro, surnamed Sancho?

D. I have that distinguished honor.

W. I have understood you first learned to whistle in the Spanish language as well as to walk?

D. Yes, and my orders for my boot-jack or more soap are still given in that tongue.

W. I suppose common folks look up to you down there?

D. Yes, they do, especially those who are seeking an office or a favor.

W. Do women clamor for Woman's Rights there?

D. No. If women wanted woman's rights there they would be in danger of getting men's lefts.

W. I suppose you will allow that the United States is a higher nation than Brazil?

D. It is several degrees higher in latitude, I will admit—(taking a chew of Indian rubber, in his desire for individual experience?)

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

NOT ALL BAD.

THE world isn't *all* bad, my dear friends. To be sure, there are earthquakes, droughts, floods and conflagrations; there may be bitter cold winters and parching hot summers; yet, take it all in all, there are blessings far, far in excess of disasters.

Did you ever think of how many homes there are scattered over this vast world of ours, and did you ever think what a charm that very word "home" has to many? The dwellings may be poor, they may be "far from the madding crowd," they may lack many a comfort, but they are somebody's *home!* Love lives there as well as in the gilded palace. The dwellers may not have *much* to be thankful for, but they have *something*, and their prayers are prayers of gratitude for what they do possess.

Where love is, everything seems bright and glorious, and while many of us are lamenting and wondering what makes the world so vile to live on, thousands of others are rejoicing at God's goodness and wondering how they deserve to live on a world so full of beauty and magnificence.

The inhabitants of the world are not *all* bad. They may *seem* so, to some minds, but they really are not. There seems to be more wickedness in the days that now are than in days gone by, and this may be so, because there are more people living. I don't deny that we have thieves, defrauders and murderers, but they are not in the majority. I know it is heart-breaking to see how many persons, whom we have had reliance upon and confidence in, and who have held high and responsible offices, have betrayed that trust and must now rank among the world's rascals. That is not a very pretty word, but it is a dictionary word, and a very applicable one. Still, there are hosts of good, noble and true men and women living whose lives are examples for us to follow and whose morality and goodness we would do well to pattern by. Their lives are not filled with canting phrases, nor with soulless words, but occupied in doing noble deeds—deeds as heroic as any hero ever accomplished.

Their heroism may not be of the kind noted in novels; they may not have had their names engraved on the scroll of earthly fame, but angels have recorded their deeds, and such a record is more lasting than any we could write.

In true nobility of heart they keep their helping hand to a fallen brother or sister; a kind action and word of interest may have turned many from their wayward course, and they have not withheld them. How many of God's creatures are at this very moment, while I am penning these lines, comforting the sick and dying, administering to the afflicted and aiding the poverty-stricken!

They're compelled to borrow a cent. You can get money for nothing down there, and a whole lot thrown in for good measure.

W. Is there employment for all there?

D. Yes; and if one man is out of work there will be a dozen to pull off their coats and turn in and help him all day, (handing me a Spanish and half Connecticut cigar.)

W. I should judge that so great a man as you would have a pretty big toothache if you ever condescended to have any?

D. You're right; every toothache I have averages forty bushels to the acher.

W. I understand that the former occupants of your country dug some pretty big rivers there?

D. The Amazon is an Amazin' river. It is wider than it is long, and so deep that it reaches through to the other side, and several miles beyond. Small boys catch whales in it a hundred feet long, and it has neither top nor bottom.

W. You haven't got any little half-formed Golconda diamond that you're tired of and are about to throw away?

D. None on hand just now.

W. And you have n't any little paltry office vacant worth a hundred thousand small dollars a year with which you could assist a small man with a poor family?

D. None, unless it would be general Interrogation to the whole kingdom.

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W. And you have n't any little paltry office vacant worth a hundred thousand small dollars a year with which you could assist a small man with a poor family?

"He did! Well, well; I'll be even with Fred Ashe, M. D., some day. But, Clinton, how would little Alice Ray have shone on your arm to-night?"

"Not like the elegant, peerless Minerva Clinton!" was the ardent, impulsive reply.

The banker's daughter bowed her head, as a half-blush swept over her voluptuous face. She trembled slightly, too—mayhap with the anticipation of a speedy and a glorious triumph. She suddenly looked up.

"I am assured of one thing, Clinton," she said; "and perhaps your mind may be set at ease by my confiding it to you."

She paused and looked at him earnestly.

"Speak on, Minerva; tell me."

Fred Ashe loves Alice Ray, the lumberman's daughter. He adores her; and she loves him!"

"What! I—"

"Sh! hark! What is that?" whispered Minerva, as just then the rattling scenes shook violently.

Young Craig heard the noise; but it did not startle him in the least.

"It was a sudden gust of wind, Minerva. Can't you feel it?"

"Ah! yes; it was the wind. It is very chilly here."

She drew closer and more confidently toward the young man.

"Then come, we'll go, Minerva. You may—"

"No; keep still, Clinton," she interrupted, restraining him. "I am never cold or uncomfortable when in your company!"

The words were pointed and bold.

The young man colored; but the thrill that shot through his frame was delicious in the extreme.

"I am glad to know it, Minerva," he said, with some confusion. "Also that Alice Ray loves my friend, Dr. Ashe. To tell you the truth," and he hesitated, "we must manage to marry this little Ray girl to your enemy, the doctor, and I will then breathe freer."

"You! how?"

"Because, Minerva—well, I have more than once thought that Alice Ray has some regard for me."

Clinton Craig blushed like a woman.

"You rate yourself well, Clinton," said Minerva, rather coldly; she knew that the young man spoke the truth; and she was jealous of "little" Alice Ray—of every one who came between her ambitious self and the man whom she was working to win.

But was her love for that man genuine and self-sacrificing? Minerva asked herself this question as she sat there.

Again there was a pause.

"You, yourself, Minerva, once hinted the same to me," said the young man, somewhat reluctantly.

"Yes; but I was simply talking for pastime. Enough, however, of Alice Ray; my word for it, she hates you; and I'll stake my life that she is even now engaged to Fred Ashe."

Again there was a violent shaking of the canvas; but the young folk paid no heed to it now; they knew it was nothing but the wind.

"I hope what you say is true, Minerva," remarked Clinton, emphatically.

To this the girl made no reply, but sat pondering for a moment. Suddenly she glanced toward her escort and said, slyly:

"Mr. Algernon Floyd—your cousin by adoption, Clinton—looked wondrously handsome and dignified to-night."

Young Craig started as though struck by a knife. He colored despite himself, and bit viciously at the ends of his sweeping mustache.

Minerva noticed his perturbation; she seemed to enjoy it.

"I could not refuse him, when he asked me so humbly, so graciously to dance with him," she continued. "I fancy we did not make a bad looking couple, though truth be told, I like contrasts: his hair is black, so is mine. But yours, Clinton, is auburn."

These words were spoken in an insinuating, apparently artless tone, while the girl's dark eyes blazed into the young man's face.

Clinton Craig started. But a scowl passed over his face. His mind was occupied with other thoughts; it was filled with the image of his dark-browed cousin.

"I like not this fellow, Algernon Floyd!" he said, gruffly.

"Is it because he is less forward than yourself, Clinton?" asked the girl, quietly. "Is it because his uncle, his own flesh and blood, sees fit most unmercifully to cut him off from a just inheritance, and give the vast fortune which he has accumulated to one who is in nowise related to him—to you, Clinton, the creature of a whim!"

Clinton winced; he set his teeth hard together, but before he could reply, the girl continued earnestly:

"I tell you, my friend, that Algernon Floyd is no mean specimen of a man to insure a woman's heart; and—But then, unlucky dog!" and she checked herself, "he has no money."

She laughed lightly and scornfully.

Despite her laugh, however, she had spoken seriously, half-bitterly and enviously. Her words had found a lodgment in Clinton Craig's bosom. His brow contracted, for a moment a contemptuous sneer curled his lip and a glimmer shone in his eyes.

Still Minerva laughed lightly, though she knew full well that she had gone too far, and had, under the impulse of the moment, over-shot the mark. But the girl looked surpassingly lovely as she stole her hand confidingly into that of the handsome fellow who sat beside her. And that individual was not proof against such blandishment. At heart he loved the splendid woman, madly. His face slowly unwrinkled, the foreboding frown fled away, and a glad smile swept over it. He clasped the small, warm hand, and murmured softly:

"Money or not, Minerva, there is only one such maiden as you in the wide world!"

She attempted to withdraw her hand, but he held it fast.

"Now can I think, Minerva," he continued earnestly, "that you value a man simply by the size of his purse, and the credit of his check. I am not to be blamed that my adopted father has seen fit, as all say, to make me heir to his fortune. Yet this is not absolutely known as a fact. I do not begrudge Algernon Floyd anything, and if I thought I could thus secure your favor, I would gladly have him receive the entire inheritance. But, Minerva," and his voice had a stern tone of warning, "Algernon Floyd is a bad man, an envious, wicked-hearted fellow. I have heard dark tales of him. Besides, my dear Minerva," and he clasped her hand more tightly, "he does not love you—love you as I do. Oh! forgive me, darling one! I could not restrain myself."

Minerva Clayton did not move, nor did she show the least sign of displeasure. She allowed her warm, throbbing hand to remain in his once. Then quietly she slid her magnificent head to his shoulder, and let it nestle there.

"And do you love me, Clinton, dear Clinton?" she asked in a low, sweet voice, while she gazed tenderly at him.

"As life itself!" was the hot, impulsive re-

ply. "I worship you, darling! Speak, Minerva, speak just one word; Can you not, in some degree, at least, return my love? Speak, darling one!"

He stole his arm around her yielding waist.

"Do you love Alice Ray—love her in the least, Clinton?" asked the maiden, softly, never removing her glowing eyes from his face.

"Not in the least! Before God and man I pledge you that not a pulse of my heart thrills for Alice Ray!"

"Then, Clinton, I am yours, yours alone, yours forever!" was the burning exclamation, the whole passionate nature of the woman bursting forth, as she lifted her ripe virgin lips to his.

And Clinton Craig bowed his head of chestnut curls over that transcendently fascinating face, and kissed those warm, red lips.

Wrapt in love's embrace the two needed not the violent rattling of the canvas near them; they cared not now for wind or calm. They were fairly afloat on the golden sunlit sea of love, and they thought of naught save the balmy breezes that wafted them over its surface.

At length, gently disengaging himself from her embrace, the young man arose, and covering her half-bared shoulders with her downy opera hawk, said:

"Enough! Come, Minerva; I am happy now. Come, the Academy is being deserted. Two o'clock, and we must wend our way homeward."

The maiden arose languidly, and slipping her arm in his they walked away toward the noise and bustle of the ball.

As Minerva Clayton glided along by the side of her handsome escort she murmured softly, to herself:

"Won! won!"

But Clinton Craig heard her not; for her words were but a floating breath.

Then their footsteps ceased to echo in the long passage-way, and the brilliant couple had gone.

Quietly, slowly, from behind the friendly scene-shift stepped Fred Ashe.

Leaning on his arm, her head bowed, her limbs trembling, her gentle bosom heaving tumultuously, walked Alice Ray.

"Bear up, Alice!" whispered the young man, encouragingly. "I am your friend, your brother. Who has so basely, so cheaply flung his affections away is not worthy of you. Forget me, Alice!"

But poor Alice answered not his brave words of cheer; she simply murmured distractedly to herself:

"Lost! lost!"

They hurried away.

Like some grim phantom that haunts the night, suddenly, quietly, a tall figure emerged from the heavy shadows hanging over the obscure passage, and paused in the light of the solitary burner.

The straight pencil of light revealed the dark, sunburnt features of Algernon Floyd. The fellow's face was half-wrinkled under an ominous scowl, and half-illuminated by a flash of victory.

"Ha! ha!" he laughed, grimly. "He spoke ill of me; she, glittering Jezebel! spoke well of me! Shall I compass both? Can it? Ye gods!" he continued, with an oath, "to the brave, there's no such word as fail! Come! be still, my ambitious heart! for now the time of work has come!"

His mutterings died away as he turned and disappeared down the passage.

All was now bustle and confusion; the ball was on the wane; the hour was half-past two in the morning, and many eyes, so bright and flashing a few brief hours before, were now dull and listless.

The great event was near its close. Shawls, furrs, muffs, rubbers, etc., etc., were again in requisition; and carriages, stretching out almost an interminable length on Locust street, were departing moment by moment laden with their precious living freight.

Clinton Craig was in the coat-room hunting out the articles demanded by his check. Fred Ashe was there too, already buttoned up and gloved, prepared for the wintry weather without. The physician's face was sad and serious.

But Clinton was all life and fire; his face was radiant with a well-won triumph.

At that moment, Algernon Floyd, lofty and gloomy, entered.

The room was crowded with bustling, hurrying beaux, old and young, and each one was intent on his own business.

The dark-browed Floyd walked by young Craig, and, watching his opportunity, deliberately whisked his cane across the young man's cheek.

In an instant Craig's face was crimson; then it grew as pallid as a moonlit grave-stone as he looked up and saw Algernon Floyd.

"Please be careful, sir," he said, sternly, as the other paused.

"Careful?" sneered Floyd. "I was careful enough, my fancy fledgling, to strike you in the face—just as I intended to do."

Dr. Ashe heard all this. He moved promptly forward.

"Dirty hound that you are!" exclaimed Clinton, striding toward his insultor.

Before the doctor could interfere, the two strong men had exchanged blows. There is no telling how the disgraceful affair would have terminated had not the bystanders separated the combatants.

"Shame on you, Algernon Floyd, to have provoked this disturbance!" exclaimed young Fred Ashe, with flushed cheeks.

Floyd's dusky face glowed with passion as he retorted:

"Wait till this is ended, sir, and I promise to accommodate you. As for you, Clinton Craig, you shall not escape thus easily! I swear it!"

With a mocking bow, he strode proudly and defiantly from the room.

Clinton Craig was trembling with passion, but he controlled himself; and linking his arm in that of his friend, he bowed and left the apartment.

Ten minutes later, apparently undisturbed, happy and exultant again, he was jolting away in a carriage with Minerva Clayton. And that peerless maiden, her hand in his, murmured earnestly:

"Won! won!"

But poor stricken Alice Ray, seated beside Dr. Ashe in the carriage that was conveying them homeward, only bowed her tearful face, and muttered:

"Lost! lost!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 333.)

An amusing story is told of a backwoodsman who saw a carpet for the first time in the house of a city friend. He first thought it was some kind of ornament—probably an oil painting; but, perceiving a bare place at the further end of the room, he stepped back a few paces, and, with a running jump, struck the floor about six inches from the carpet. When his heels struck the floor, he slipped and fell back, but quietly arose, looked complacently at the space he had leaped, and cried: "By gosh, I cleared her!"

THE BATHER.

BY MARY ASHLEY TOWNSEND.

Warm from her waist her girlish she unbound, And cast it down on the incense turf; She scrutinized with keen though timid eyes, Then copse, and cove, and deep secluded vale, And stood with ear intent to catch each stir Of leaf or wing, or bird's low song. Her hidden heart beat quicker even to hear The wild bee woo the blossom with a hymn, Or hidden insect break its lance of sound Against the obtuse silence. Then she smiled, A fair own friend, and knew herself.

"Do you love Alice Ray—love her in the least, Clinton?" asked the maiden, softly, never removing her glowing eyes from his face.

"Not in the least! Before God and man I pledge you that not a pulse of my heart thrills for Alice Ray!"

"Then, Clinton, I am yours, yours alone, yours forever!" was the burning exclamation, the whole passionate nature of the woman bursting forth, as she lifted her ripe virgin lips to his.

And Clinton Craig bowed his head of chestnut curls over that transcendently fascinating face, and kissed those warm, red lips.

As the scene closed, the young English nobles had been in a genuine skirmish with the Indians—an experience as novel as it was undesirable. Not one had shown the white feather.

"Oh," moaned Charlie, "you are killing me, too, Mr. Vernon, with this story. Oh, I cannot bear it."

"Man, that is born of woman, is prone to trouble as the sparks are to fly upward," continued Mr. Vernon. "Try to be a man, Charles, my dear boy. Her mother has had to endure it—and I. They dragged her to the altar, in a strange city, and forced her to sign the marriage register; then hurried her on board the Dover steamer, to take her to England, where the old baronet proposed passing the honeymoon. Knowing her to be desperate, and apprehensive that she might attempt to destroy herself, they would not leave her alone an instant. They had taken the evening boat, the day of the marriage, and about nine o'clock, as they sat, at her request, on deck, she, appearing very resigned and docile, with a lightning movement, leaped over the guards into the turbid waters of the Channel."

Charlie moaned and hid his face in his hands. It was several minutes before Mr. Vernon could proceed.

"They stopped the steamer and sent out all the boats at command; but the night was dark, the sea rough—they did not find her."

"Charlie," asked his companion, after a time, "would it be any comfort to you to hear that the bad man who had led her with her father against our poor Violet was drowned in the effort to rescue her?"

"Oh, I don't know," was the shuddering reply. "I have no right to feel in that way."

"True: 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.' We dare not be glad of his punishment; but he was punished—fearfully! He insisted on getting into one of the boats, with three sailors, capsized it by his awkwardness, was carried under the ship, and could not be found. Their comrades had a time to save the sailors, as it was."

"Fraser! Fraser! oh, God! he is dying. Fraser!"

At the sound of his name called in that piercing, agonized voice, the wounded man opened his darkening eyes.

"Fraser, I am here. It is your little girl—your poor little girl. Do not die—look at me—speak to me—my darling!"

"Florence, is this you?" the words came with difficulty.

"Yes, yes. Do not be angry with me, my husband. Did you think I could keep away from you? Let you go off here, into danger—Ah, heaven! he will die, in spite of all. Help! can none of you help him?" she piteously asked, turning her great dark eyes, full of misery, upon those who stood about, listening in wonder and agitation to the words of the two.

"Stand aside; let me see the wound," spoke the authoritatively commanding voice of the guide.

"Then you did throw yourself overboard from the steamer?"

"Yes—to escape Sir Israel. He came after me. The men picked me up, as by a miracle. It was thought I was dead for more than an hour; but a physician finally revived me. I was saved—and he—was swept under the vessel."

She shuddered, and grew silent. Charlie could see, even in that faint light, how wan, how almost ghastly, the sweet face had grown. Her father smiled grimly, as he sat by her side. To the young man he appeared like an inquisitor, torturing his victim to death, by slow degrees, and enjoying the process. His heart almost burst with indignation; he could hardly refrain from laying his hands on the large white throat of the man and squeezing some of the badness out of him.

The carriage drew up before a fine hotel.

"Do you propose to inflict your company upon us?" asked Mr. Goldsbrough, insolently.

"Yes, sir, for a little while. I talked with your daughter Florence less than three weeks ago. She is a wife, now; and sent a message to you."

The smooth face of the scoundrel changed. He loved his daughter—there was no mistake about that!

"Married! my little girl a wife!" he said, huskily. "Come up to our parlor, Mr. Ward, and tell me about it."

Charlie entered the hotel with them, accompanying them to their private parlor on an upper floor. Mr. Goldsbrough ordered dinner to be served in the room, immediately; and, while the meal progressed, listened to what his guest had to tell him about his child. Charlie saw fit to tell only the favorable part of the story.

"Demme, I might have known her bright eyes would catch her a rich husband in no time," commented the father, drinking glass after glass of champagne. Finally, coffee was placed, at the host's request, on the table; the elder man turned and stooped to pick up his napkin—the waiter had been dismissed with the appearance of the coffee—and Charlie seized the opportunity to drop a powder into his cup, which he had for some time been holding ready, in the hollow of his hand.

It was not half an hour after this before the wine, and the powerful but not dangerous opiate thus deftly administered, closed the eyes of the scheming barker in a profound sleep.

"Come, Violet, this is our opportunity. Your mother is in Paris. I will take you directly to her. We can gain the night train to Dover, if we leave here immediately. Will you trust yourself to me?"

"Will I trust an angel of light, Charlie, to save me from a demon?"

Burdened with very little baggage, light of heart, bright of countenance, with a delicious consciousness of coming bliss for which they were quite willing to bide a proper time,

"These lovers fled away into the storm," leaving the wicked father to labor with his opium-dreams.

"I was given that powder for the toothache, months ago," explained Charlie, laughing, when the train was once in motion and the young pair felt comparatively safe. "I would not take it, but placed it carefully in my wallet for future emergencies—and lo! there is a time for everything under the sun!"

A railway train is swift, but a telegraphic message is more swift, and twenty minutes before the London night express arrived at its station in Dover, the chief of police at t'at point had received an order by the wires, reading thus: "Arrest a young couple, eloping; the lady about seventeen, fair complexion, blue eyes, an American; the young gentleman, brown eyes, hair ditto and curling, an American, name Ward. Detain the lady at least, on order of her father, who will go on for her by next train; she is not of age, consequently subject to his control. The young man can be allowed to proceed," and signed by the head of the London detective force.

Ethan Goldsbrough had aroused from his untimely slumbers in season to strike his venomous fangs once more, with a last desperate effort, into his innocent victims.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 330.)

MY THOUGHT.

BY JOHN GOSSIP.

What is your thought like?
My thought is like a bubble-sphere
That rises like a silver ball;
It scarce can touch the buoyant air
Except it burst and straightway fall.

Could I but loose it from my brain
And hold it forth in colors warm,
Ah! then the Perfect Type would gain
Its place on earth in every form!

LA MASQUE.

The Veiled Sorceress;

OR,

THE MIDNIGHT QUEEN.

A TALE OF ILLUSION, DELUSION, AND MYSTERY.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,

AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "THE TWIN SISTERS," "AN AWFUL MYSTERY,"

"ERMINIE," ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.—CONTINUED.

The court-yard, unlike the city streets, swarmed with busy life. Pages, and attendants, and soldiers were moving hither and thither, or lounging about, preparing for the morning's journey to Oxford. Among the rest Sir Norman observed Hubert, lying very much at his ease wrapped in his cloak, on the ground, and chatting languidly with a pert and pretty attendant of the fair Mistress Stuart. He cut short his flirtation, however, abruptly enough, and sprang to his feet as he saw Sir Norman, while George immediately darted off and disappeared within the palace.

"Am I late, Hubert?" said his hurried questioner, as he drew the lad's arm within his own, and led him off out of hearing.

"I think not. The count," said Hubert, with laughing emphasis, "has not been visible since he entered yonder doorway, and there has been no message that I have heard of. Doubtless, now that George has arrived, the message will soon be here, for the royal procession starts within half an hour."

"Are you sure there is no trick, Hubert? Even now may he be with Leoline!"

Hubert shrugged his shoulders.

"He may be; we must take our chance for that; but we have his royal word to the contrary. Not that I have much faith in that!" said Hubert, in parenthesis, "kings' promises and French porcelain being only made to be broken!"

"If he were king of the world instead of only England," cried Sir Norman, with flashing eyes, "he should not have Leoline while I wore a sword to defend her!"

"Regicide!" exclaimed Hubert, holding up

both hands in affected horror. "Do my ears deceive me? Is this the loyal and chivalrous Sir Norman Kingsley, ready to die for king and country?"

"Stuff and nonsense!" interrupted Sir Norman, impatiently. "Don't talk absurdly all the time, Hubert, if you can help it! I tell you any one, be he whom he may, that attempts to take Leoline from me, must reach her over my dead body!"

"Bravo! You ought to be a Frenchman, Sir Norman! And what if the lady herself, finding her dazzling suitor drop his barn-yard feathers, and soar over her head in his own eagle plumes, may not give you your *coup de conque*, and usurp the place of pretty Madam Stuart?"

"You cold-blooded young villain! if you insinuate such a thing again, I'll throttle you! Leoline loves me, and me alone!"

"Doubtless she thinks so; but she has yet to learn she has a king for a suitor!"

"Bah! You are nothing but a heartless cynic," said Sir Norman, yet with an anxious and irritated flush on his face, too. "What do you to you?"

The smooth face of the scoundrel changed. He loved his daughter—there was no mistake about that!

"Married! my little girl a wife!" he said, huskily. "Come up to our parlor, Mr. Ward, and tell me about it."

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"I have nothing but his word for it!" said Sir Norman, in a distracted tone, "and, at present, can do nothing but bide my time. I am afraid Leoline will think we have deserted her altogether, and give herself up to despair."

"I have been thinking of that, too! I promised, you know, when I left her, last night, that we would return before day-dawn and rescue her. The unhappy little beauty will doubtless think I have fallen into the tiger's jaws myself, and has half-wept her bright eyes out by this time!"

"My poor Leoline! And oh, Hubert, if you only knew what she is to you!"

"I do know! She told me she was my sister!"

Sir Norman looked at him in amazement.

"She told you, and you take it like this?"

"Certainly, I take it like this. How would you have me take it? It is nothing to go into hysterics about, after all!"

"I have nothing but his word for it!" said Sir Norman, with infinite disgust, "you are the worst! If you were told you were to receive the crown of France tomorrow, you would probably open your eyes wide, and take it as you would a new cap!"

"Of course I would. I haven't lived in courts half my life to get up a scene for a small matter! Besides, I had an idea from the first moment I saw Leoline that she must be my sister, or something of that sort."

"And so you felt no emotion whatever on hearing it?"

"I don't know as I properly understand what you mean by emotions," said Hubert, reflectively. "But ye-e-s, I did feel somewhat pleased—she is so like me, and so uncommonly handsome!"

"Humph! there's a reason! Did she tell you how she discovered it herself?"

"Let me see—no—I think not—she simply mentioned the fact."

"She did not tell you either, I suppose that you had more sisters than herself?"

"More than herself? No. That would be a little too much of a good thing! One sister is quite enough for any reasonable mortal."

"But there were two more, my good young friend!"

"Is it possible?" said Hubert, in a tone that betrayed not the slightest symptom of emotion. "Who are they?"

Sir Norman paused one instant, combating a strong temptation to seize the phlegmatic page by the collar, and give him such another shaking as he would not get over for a week to come; but suddenly recollecting he was Leoline's brother, and by the same token a marquis or thereabouts, he merely paused to cast a withering look upon him, and walk on.

"Well," said Hubert, "I am waiting to be told."

"You may wait, then!" said Sir Norman, with a smothered growl; "and I give you joy when I tell you. Such extra communication is to one so stolid could do no good!"

"But I am not stolid! I am in a perfect agony of anxiety!" said Hubert, making a grimace to represent the agony. "Tell me all about it, Sir Norman—it is as little as you can do for your new brother."

"You young jackanapes!" said Sir Norman, half-laughing, half-incensed. "It were a wise deed and a godly one to take you by the hind leg and nape of the neck, and pitch you over yonder wall; but for your sister's sake I will desist."

"Which of them?" inquired Hubert, with provoking gravity.

"It would be more to the point if you asked me who the others were, I think!"

"So I have, and you merely abused me for it. But, I think I know one of them without being told. It is that other *fac-simile* of Leoline and myself who died in the robin's ruin!"

"Exactly. You and she, and Leoline, were twins!"

"And who is the other?"

"Her name is La Masque! Have you ever heard it?"

"La Masque! Nonsense!" exclaimed Hubert, with some energy in his voice, at last. "You but jest, Sir Norman Kingsley!"

"No such thing! It is a positive fact! She told me the whole story herself!"

"And what is the whole story; and why did she not tell it to me instead of you?"

"She told it to Leoline, thinking, probably, she had the most sense; and she told it to me, as Leoline's future husband. It is somewhat long to relate, but it will help to beguile the time while we are waiting for the royal despatch."

And hereupon, Sir Norman, without further preface, launched into rapid *resume* of La Masque's story, feeling the cold chill with which he had witnessed it creep over him as he narrated her fearful end. Hubert listened, with his dark eyes fixed on the ground, and his face a perfect blank wall for all the emotion or excitement it expressed.

"It struck me," concluded Sir Norman, "that it would be better to secure any papers she might possess at once, lest, by accident, they should fall into other hands; so I rode there directly, and, in spite of the cantankerous old porter, searched diligently, like the woman after the goat, until I found them. Here they are," said Sir Norman, drawing forth the roll.

"A voluminous packet, you perceive; and every one worth a thousand times its weight in gold!"

"And what do you intend doing with them?" inquired Hubert, glancing at them with an unmoved countenance.

"Show them to the king, and, through his mediation with Louis, obtain for you the restoration of your rights."

"And do you think his majesty will give himself so much trouble for the Earl of Rochester's page?"

"I think he will take the trouble to see justice done, or at least he ought to. If he declines, we will take the matter in our own hands, my Hubert; and you and I will seek Louis ourselves. Please God, the Earl of Rochester's page will yet wear the coronet of the De Montmorencys!"

"And the sister of a marquis will be no unworthy mate even for a Kingsley," said Hubert, in his careless way, taking Sir Norman's enthusiasm with stoical indifference. "Has La Masque left nothing for her?"

"Do you see this casket?" tapping the one of carved brass dangling from his belt; "well, it is full of jewels worth a king's ransom. I found them in a drawer of La Masque's house, and soar over her head in his own eagle plumes, may not give you your *coup de conque*, and usurp the place of pretty Madam Stuart?"

"You cold-blooded young villain! if you insinuate such a thing again, I'll throttle you! Leoline loves me, and me alone!"

"Doubtless she thinks so; but she has yet to learn she has a king for a suitor!"

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A FAT SWEETHEART.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

She weighed two hundred precious pounds; Her age was just a score; I doled on her as my all— If not a great deal more. I looked more like an arrow than, Although I was but boyish— And my love encircled her— As far as it would go. Large-hearted was this charming maid; Her love was not alloyed; When she was absent from my sight, She left an awful void. And when beside her I would sit, I was a worshiper— Whose eyes I gazed could never see Another like her but her. No one could e'er conceive the hopes I used to revel in Of some day making her my own, And she was much to win. I always had her in my heart— As much as I could get, And so my heart was always full, As you might freely bet. She was a girl of pure mind, As you could well infer; I made a good deal of that girl— For there was much of her. My hopes of her were always large— Oh, many tons they weighed! I used to ponder her long— She was a ponderous maid. The girl was large and was small; I used to think fate was kind. She lean-jinely leaned on me With love that had some weight. I treated her with tenderness, And tended her with care, For if she had got down on me, She would have crushed me. I longed to make a wife of her, She was enough for three; I thought she was a burden that I could support with glee. But when I asked her to be mine, Into my arms she fell, And mashed me down upon the floor— And crushed my love as well.

Yankee Boys in Ceylon:
OR,
THE CRUISE OF THE FLYAWAY.BY C. D. CLARK,
AUTHOR OF "IN THE WILDERNESS," "ROD
AND RIFLE," "CAMP AND CANOE," ETC.

II.—HUNTING THE BUFFALO.

FOR the rest of the day and the night which followed, the Flyaway lay at her anchors, and the watch kept the deck. It was a stormy anchorage, but quite as good as Colombo, the chief city on that coast, which is nothing more than an open roadstead; and this was in a measure protected by the reefs in front. Besides, at this point, there was a strong *under-tow*, which acted against the wind, keeping the schooner steady.

What is an undertow? some of my readers may ask.

The waves, dashing upon a low shore, run out again immediately along the sloping bottom. While the waves are rolling in above, a strong current is running out below. The water in which the Flyaway lay was very shallow, and this current caught her, and did its best to drive her out to sea, while the wind struggled to reach the other side.

"There are two paths where they will come out," announced Modo. "This is one of them, and you are sure to get a shot."

"I'll stay here with the Winchester, boys," decided Will Wade. "I'll be bound they don't go through this pass under the fusillade *I'll* give them."

"Don't kill them *all* before they get to us, Will," suggested Ned, laughing.

"Oh no," was the answer; "but you must not expect me to leave you more than one apiece."

The boys followed Pete across the crest of the ridge until they reached a place where another path led out of the valley. On each side of this pass they stationed themselves and looked out toward the huge game, which had left the water now, and were feeding quietly upon the rich grass further up the valley. Half an hour passed; then they saw one of the bulls suddenly erect his head and look wildly toward the other side of the pond, as two dark figures darted out, with wild shouts and uncouth gestures. The bearers who had been sent out by Modo were doing their work. Alarmed by the sudden apparition, the buffaloes turned and tore wildly down the valley, followed by the two bearers on the rim, shouting and waving their hands above their heads. In spite of the frantic speed of the herd these men kept up to them, urging them to new exertions as they ran. Will, crouching in the jungle, saw that they were heading directly for his pass, and laid his Winchester in the rest which he had formed by thrusting two crossed sticks into the earth, and lying down behind it in the western style, with his left elbow on the earth, he waited.

He knew well that the Winchester, while not so good as a breech or muzzle loader at long range, was trusty at close quarters, hence he did not fire until they were within easy range. Then, looking through the double sights, he opened fire upon them. His first shot glanced from the horn of the leading bull and stung him to madness, for a roar broke from his throat of such terrible volume that the bearer who stood behind the young hunter began to look down the ridge to see which way he should run. At the second shot the bull went down, shot through the heart, and the bearer pressed the spare gun upon the young hunter, for he had never heard of a weapon which could be discharged more than twice. To his horror, the youngster did not move, but sent another ball among the buffaloes with deadly effect, for a calf dropped before it. The bearer started up, and as the fourth shot echoed through the hills, he picked up his active heels and went flying through the jungle, determined that not for fee or reward would he stay with a concur, who had a gun which was always loaded! The last shot did the business, and the four remaining buffaloes turned away from that deadly fusillade, and went flying along the ridge in the direction of the second pass, little dreaming of the reception which awaited them there.

The rest of the party were waiting. They had witnessed, from their hiding place in the bushes, the valorous conduct of Will, and at one time Richard began to think that the boy would not even be as good as his word—give them "one apiece" to shoot at. But, when the herd turned and came tearing down toward them, they were all excitement.

"Here they come!" whispered Dick, as he made ready his Remington. "Oh, look at them, will you? There is more real game in those fellows than half a dozen of our buffalo. Look at those horns—what heads for my money!"

Modo had been nicknamed "Pete" on the spot, and his companion, whose name was unpronounceable, received the beautiful *nom de plume* of "Luke McGlukle" and bore the name proudly, as something given him by the "American sahibs," for whom he had the highest respect.

"Now then, Pete," said Ned, "you promised to show us some game."

"I can do it, sahib," answered the man, quietly, "and what I say shall be done. Do you want gun-bearers? Here are many."

As he spoke a motley crew of dark-faced men, in the same "undress" uniform worn by the pilots, came trooping down to the beach.

"Pick out two," ordered Richard. "You may carry my spare gun, and Luke can take charge of Ned's."

"I am a hunter!" replied Modo, proudly. "I must have my own gun and shoot."

"All right?" responded Richard. "Pick out your men, and I will pay them."

The men were quickly selected, and took the spare rifles proudly. Will had a Winchester carbine, a sixteen-shooter, and, as a spare gun, the Remington. He was not quite as good a shot as his brothers, and, calculating upon this, he had a reserve in the repeating weapon, as he did not need to load so often. The men who had been selected as bearers looked down with lofty pride upon their compatriots, who had not been distinguished by the sahibs from the West. They stepped off with a martial air in the rear of the little party, ready, if the truth must be told, to run like black sheep in the hour of danger. The coast was low at this point, and they crossed a sort of swale, overgrown with thick jungle grass.

"Pete," with the air of a major-general, stalked on in front, turning now and then to administer a haughty reproof to some of the bearers, who had presumed upon their sudden advancement so far as to speak aloud. After a march of half a mile they came to higher ground, and began the ascent of a little ridge, covered with dense jungle, through which they forced their way with great difficulty. Modo raised his hand for silence as they reached the top of the ridge, and the bearers began to lose the haughty air which had so far distinguished them.

"Buffalo!" said the guide, briefly.

They looked down into a little circular valley, in the center of which was a small lake, or rather large pond—for Ceylon has not any lakes, properly so called. The banks of this pond were low and bare of vegetation, and a number of dark spots were seen, moving about upon the verge. At that distance, nearly three miles, the Americans could not make them out. But Will had a field-glass, which he brought to bear upon the moving objects. They were six in number, huge creatures with shaggy fronts and cumbersome horns—the wild buffalo of the East.

"Hurrah!" cried Ned, as he took the glass in his turn. "They are big fellows, Dick. One, two, three, four full grown and two young 'uns. Let's get at them."

"Wait!" ordered Modo. "I can send the buffalo to you, and then you will not have so far to carry the heads. The American sahibs like the head best, and the Cingalese are not too proud to take what they leave. They will eat the rest."

"Does he think we eat the heads?" asked Will, laughing.

"Do your work!" commanded Richard briefly. Modo turned to the bearers and spoke to them in their own tongue. Two dropped their rifles and turned to the right and left, skirting the valley to reach the other side.

"There are two paths where they will come out," announced Modo. "This is one of them, and you are sure to get a shot."

"I'll stay here with the Winchester, boys," decided Will Wade. "I'll be bound they don't go through this pass under the fusillade *I'll* give them."

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"Now then, Pete," said Ned, "you promised to show us some game."

The fourth, a gigantic bull, caught sight of Richard as he stood erect, reaching behind him for the spare rifle in the hands of "Luke McGlukle." But that worthy, seeing the bull charging straight at them, at once showed a clean pair of heels, taking with him the two spare rifles. Beside the rifles, the boys always carried revolvers, navy Colts of the heaviest kind. Richard snatched this weapon from his belt and fired three shots fast as he could cock the weapon. Every ball told, but the huge beast only shook his shaggy head and dashed on. Two more shots were fired, when Ned, pistol in hand, dashed up to aid his brother, reckless of his own life. Dick fired his last shot when the muzzle of his weapon almost touched the front of the buffalo, and then bounding rapidly aside, he turned to run, when a shout from Ned called him back. He did not hear the beat of hoofs behind him, and whirling suddenly, he saw the buffalo slowly sinking to the earth, the white foam dropping from his distended nostrils. A moment more and he came to the earth with a crash, and they all saw that he was dead. The last shot, fired when scarcely a pace separated them, had done the work, piercing through the glaring eyes to the very brain. Richard drew a long sigh of relief.

"I thought I was done for," he admitted. "Where is that scoundrel Luke? I'll give him the worst dressing down he ever got."

"He is a coward," said Pete, loftily. "You see that it is best to trust in one whose arm is mighty in the hunt and in battle."

"You have behaved well," replied Richard.

"Will you speak to the Sahib Sawyer, and tell him so?"

"Yes; load up again, and finish that fellow with the broken shoulder. The other is off."

Ned loaded quickly, and running up close, sent a ball through the heart of the wounded buffalo. The one which had been hit by Richard, in the first instance, had charged past them and escaped, but five out of the six had been laid low.

At a peculiar signal from Modo, fifty Cingalese appeared from as many hiding places, and, amid shouting and rejoicing, the heads were separated from the bodies of the three largest bulls, and a party selected to carry the calf which Will had killed to the ship. The rest of the meat was given to the villagers, and while that lasted there was feasting and rejoicing among the Cingalese, who remember to this day the hour the Americans landed on their coast. "Luke McGlukle" streaked back among the rest, but Richard took the guns from him, "lifted" him with all the force of a number eight foot, and so discharged him, while Pete looked on calmly, caring nothing for the disgrace of his comrade. Then they returned to the schooner, and before nightfall, with their trophies, they were outside the reefs, heading toward Colombo, where they meant to land for supplies.

Alice King's Inheritance.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"Pretty! Why, man, it is simply the most exquisite face I ever saw in my life. Alice King, did you say her name was?"

Chauncey Hetherington's own face, as handsome as a god's, with its grave, splendid blue eyes, its dark gold-brown beard, worn on the sides of his fair face, cut pointed and flowing away from his perfect chin, with its heavy drooping mustache, its gold-brown hair, half-curled over his splendid head—this fair, faultless face of Chauncey Hetherington was all alight with enthusiasm as he turned for a second look at the slender young girl who had passed his vision for one second, with vail uplifted, as she stopped for an ardent, admiring glance at a group of Rogers' statuary in the elegant show-window of the store, just inside which Chauncey Hetherington had been having a brief, chance chat with one of the proprietors.

Old Mr. Falstone smiled at Hetherington's unusual interest.

"She is as pretty a little bit of flesh and blood as one would wish to see, and as noble a girl as lives. I've only known her a short time—known her by sight and reputation, I mean—but all I see, and all I hear, tends to heighten both admiration and respect. Her story is like a leaf from a romance."

Mr. Hetherington's handsome eyes were all eager attention.

"You can see at a glance she is a young lady of refinement and culture and breeding—her very walk indicates it; and yet she is very poor, so poor she was obliged to open a small cheap boarding-house a few months ago to obtain means of support for herself and young brother, an unfortunate little lad—lame or blind, I think—a boy of seven or so, with a face like one of Guido's angels."

Chauncey suddenly straightened from his attitude of lazy, graceful enjoyment of Mr. Falstone's story.

"I repeat the words almost mechanically; then, an expression of sudden, bewildered surprise dawned on his face.

"Yes," answered Mr. Falstone. "But that is not the *creme* of the story. It seems that Miss King was born and reared in luxury, and all her life had been led to expect she and little Felix would be her grandfather's heirs—"

Chauncey interrupted him.

"Felix! The boy's name is Felix, then?"

Mr. Falstone looked a little surprised at the grave interest that had suddenly taken the place of Hetherington's first curiosity.

"Felix—and he and Alice would have been the heirs of the magnificent Maijoram estate—Hetherington, you're smitten with her, you actually gave a nervous start then—but, as I was saying, the old gentleman is a fit of anger because the young lady refused to marry somebody he had set his heart on, revoked his will, and died very suddenly before he had time to come to his senses—as everybody believes he would have done. But, Miss Alice and little Felix are beggars, while some far-off relative of old Mr. Maijoram's away off in the South fell heir, in consequence of an unfortunate fit of wrath—fortunate enough for him, but certainly unlucky enough for pretty Miss Alice. But I see I've made too long a yarn. I've bored you, Hetherington. After all, it was only a pretty face that momentarily charmed you."

Chauncey arose leisurely.

"No, you haven't bored me at all. Very romantic little story—very romantic, Falstone. I suppose you'll send around the goods I've ordered to-day! I won't keep you any longer."

He strolled leisurely into Broadway, so handsome, so graceful, so completely a man to two women's hearts—whom no woman had ever yet been able to quicken a heart-beat.

"Alice King—so that's old Mr. Maijoram's granddaughter's name? I'd heard of Felix before—but nobody ever told me when the Maijoram estate came so mysteriously, so suddenly to me—that I had begged a girl with the unerring aim of Pete."

purest, noblest, sweetest face I ever looked at. Wouldn't marry a man she didn't love for the immense fortune I feel I have actually *stolen* from her! And I know she'd marry the man she *did* love if he hadn't the second coat to his back! Alice King—Alice King—what a sweet name—and keeps a boarding-house! I'll know where before I'm a day older!"

And Mr. Chauncey Hetherington bowed and smiled as he promenaded up Broadway, and scores of fair-faced women felt their hearts yearn toward him, in his grand, perfect beauty and manly grace.

how undeserving I am of such love, but, God my helper, you never shall repent giving it to me. Alice, I want to ask you something. How'd you like to go back—with me? Can you believe me, when I tell you I am old Mr. Maijoram's heir—I, Chauncey Kenneth Hetherington? Alice, isn't it grand, glorious—this beautiful romance of ours! And you and I and Felix will be so happy, won't we, darling?"

That was Alice's love story—passing strange, passing sweet, but—the beginning of a life so crowded with every blessing of Chauncey Hetherington's love, that three times, even six, after years, a wife and mother, Alice, with wondering face, and bated breath, and awesome eyes, asks her heart if it can be true.

And that fond, true heart answers jubilantly—"Yes!" and Chauncey's ardent eyes echoes the glad answer; and her babies' sweet cooings lips resound.

Tales of the Indies.

A Strange Fight at Sea.

BY YAM.

"STAND by your topsail halliards, fore and aft!" roared the mate, as the squall struck her beam-ends. A room where there were books and music and games—where Alice King had gathered together all that was left of the elegancies of her old life at Pineside, so that the delicately-nurtured boy who never stirred a step without such painful distress that most of his life had been passed on the bright-crimson silk lounge that in winter was drawn up by the fire, but in summer stood in the coolest, shadiest room—so that Felix, with his face like a "Guido's angel," and his nature and disposition correspondingly sweet, might suffer as little as possible from the great, sudden change in his condition.

But two years had gone by, and, for all his delicate beauty and softness, the boy had never once complained of the great difference—except as it affected his darling Alice—fair, Alice, whom he worshipped as only